MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID USA

PARTICIPANT PROCESSING GUIDE

ADULT | BLENDED

MHFA.ORG | THENATIONALCOUNCIL.ORG

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

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TheNationalCouncil.org

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WELCOME

Dear Participant:

We are delighted that you have chosen to become a Mental Health First Aider.

Your dedication to the program will greatly impact the lives of people living with mental health challenges.

More than 20 million Americans experience a mental health challenge in any given year. In a world that sometimes makes it feel impossible to ask for help, it's up to all of us to know when and how to offer it.

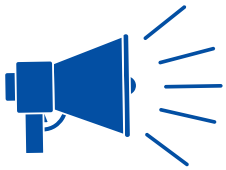
During this course, you will learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms that suggest a potential mental health challenge, how to listen nonjudgmentally and give reassurance to a person who may be experiencing a mental health challenge, and how to refer someone to appropriate professional support and services.

By taking this course, you are joining millions of people who have made the commitment to #BeTheDifference in the lives of those living with mental health challenges.

Thank you again for your dedication. Best of luck to you as you begin your journey to becoming a Mental Health First Aider.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID USA | NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CALL TO ACTION: **ADULT MHFA**



When you use the skills you learn in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), you are the first line of support for a person in need. You are there to help them feel less distressed and you can be a vital resource in helping them seek further assistance.

Your body language, what you say, and how well you listen can have a powerful impact. The quality and type of support you offer through listening can enhance coping and self-esteem. With an accurate view of mental health challenges and using a strengths-based holistic perspective, you can help others to help themselves.

You can also be an advocate, empower your community, and improve self-care. As a Mental Health First Aider, you can be the one to make a difference in the life of someone with a mental health challenge. Your actions can be a first step in someone's recovery journey.

#BeTheDifference

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mental Health First Aid USA's mission is to provide high quality, evidence-based education so everyone has the skills to support people with mental health challenges. This is only possible in training environments that foster nonjudgmental communication and understanding and reduce the stigma around mental health challenges. Participants play critical roles in establishing these environments by adhering to the following Participant Rights and Responsibilities.

PARTICIPANTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

A safe learning environment. The learning environment will be conducive to open dialogue and communication and will be free from harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or culture.

Clear and consistent instruction and evaluation. Course objectives, requirements, and evaluation criteria will be clearly communicated to participants by the Instructor before instruction begins.

Equal access of resources and learning materials. If a participant requires an ADA accommodation for instruction or instructional materials, they must complete an Accommodation Request Form and submit to the Instructor no later than five business days before the course start date.

Have grievances addressed appropriately. If a participant has a grievance that can be addressed by the Instructor, the participant should make the Instructor aware of the grievance as soon as possible. If a participant has a grievance that cannot or has not been addressed by the Instructor, they should contact the central office at:

National Council for Behavioral Health • 1400 K St. NW, #400, Washington, DC 20005
(202) 684-7457 • MHFA.org

PARTICIPANTS HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

Participate. Actively participate and remain engaged in the learning process for the duration of the course. Learners are encouraged to participate in every exercise but may opt out of exercises that make them uncomfortable.

Be respectful. Openly respect the viewpoints of others, regardless of whether the participant accepts or agrees with these viewpoints.

Ask for help. Seek help or clarification for any instructional material that is unclear. Request accommodations in advance of the course start date.

Be present. Attend at least 90% of the course and participate in at least 70% of the activities in order to receive a certificate.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Mental Health First Aid course focuses on recognizing the patterns of thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and appearance that show there might be a challenge rather than on a specific disorder. You will learn an action plan to apply to non-crisis and crisis scenarios. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Describe the purpose of Mental Health First Aid and the role of the Mental Health First Aider.
- Identify the impact of mental health challenges on the well-being of adults in the United States.
- Explain that recovery from a mental health challenge is possible.
- Describe the principles of safety and privacy for both the Mental Health First Aider and the person receiving Mental Health First Aid.
- Explain the 5 steps of the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (ALGEE).
- Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health challenges that may impact adults. Evaluate the impact of early intervention on mental health challenges.
- Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) when a person shows early signs of a mental health challenge.
- Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) when a person shows worsening signs of a mental health challenge.
- Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) to crisis situations.
- Choose appropriate methods for self-care following the application of Mental Health First Aid in a crisis or non-crisis situation.

MHFA SKILLS APPLICATION AGENDA

SEGMENT	TOPIC
1	**Welcome to Mental Health First Aid**
2	**MHFA Self-paced Introduction Recap**
3	**ALGEE: Mental Health First Aid Action Plan**
4	**MHFA for Early Signs and Symptoms**
5	**MHFA for Worsening Signs and Symptoms**
6	**MHFA for Crisis Situations**
7	**Self-care for the Mental Health First Aider**

OUR VALUES AND HOW WE DEVELOPED THE CURRICULUM

Mental Health First Aid USA developed the curriculum carefully to reflect our commitment to equity and justice.

MHFA affirms that unfair and unjust institutions have prevailed in our communities. These include a lack of proper funding for education and health care services; covert and overt violence, and resulting immediate, historical, and intergenerational trauma; egregious barriers to critical resources; and more. When noting that health inequities are present, Mental Health First Aiders should not draw conclusions about the group or community where health outcomes are not optimal. Health inequities do not result from individual choices. Rather, they stem from systemic forces. Assumptions about a group's values, efforts, abilities, strengths, health behaviors, health choices, resilience, and well-being are not useful.

HEALTH INEQUITIES SHOULD NOT BE USED TO DRAW CONCLUSIONS ABOUT A GROUP OR COMMUNITY'S

- **VALUES**
- **EFFORTS**
- **ABILITIES**
- **STRENGTHS**
- **HEALTH BEHAVIORS**
- **HEALTH CHOICES**
- **RESILIENCE**
- **WELL-BEING**

Further, MHFA believes that scientific and health research and data collection should include all genders to amplify the experience, rights, and needs of all members of our communities. We note that to date, health and science research often does not use a framework that includes people of all genders but rather the binary of woman/man in data collection.

Mental Health First Aid USA wrote and chose scenarios and videos to elevate the visibility of varying identities, perspectives, challenges, and stories of participants and Instructors in communities across the United States. The stories and characters in the scenarios and videos are not meant to be used for generalizations about communities or for confirmation of stereotypes.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

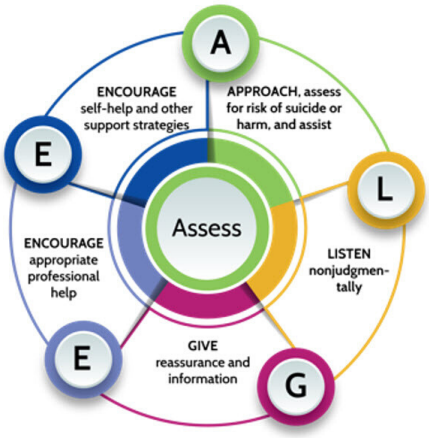
Mental Health First Aid is help for a person experiencing a mental health challenge, mental disorder, or mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

WHAT DO MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS DO?

Mental Health First Aiders...

- Do not diagnose or treat themselves or others.
- Observe changes in behaviors.
- Offer a nonjudgmental listening ear.
- Respect the privacy of the person.
- Serve as a vital link to early intervention.
- Respect and honor the culture of the person.

WHAT IS THE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID ACTION PLAN?



WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF CULTURE ON HEALTH?

The Impact of Culture on Health

- Cultural beliefs influence our health decisions every day.
- Different cultures have different norms about health that impact what people think about mental health and how they treat it.
- As First Aiders, the more we keep this in mind, the better we can support others.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP

WHAT DO MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDERS NEED TO CONSIDER BEFORE REACHING OUT?

Staying safe is the most important thing for all Mental Health First Aiders to remember.

MHFA **does not replace** any professional or legal responsibilities a First Aider has or organizational procedures a First Aider must follow as a mandatory reporter, first responder, clinician, or government employee.

WHAT IS STIGMA?

Stigma includes negative attitudes toward people with mental health or substance use challenges and can lead to discrimination.

Stigma makes it hard for people to talk about their challenges and reach out for help.

WHAT IS PERSON-FIRST LANGUAGE?

Person-first language is language that honors a person's individuality and humanity first and recognizes that a diagnosis is not who a person is but rather a part of them.

"A person living with a diagnosis of..."

WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental Health is a state of well-being in which an individual:

- Realizes their own capabilities.
- Can cope with the normal stresses of life.
- Can work productively.
- Can contribute to their community.

WHAT IS A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE?

A Mental Health Challenge is When:

- There is a major change in a person's thinking, feeling, or behavior.
- The change interferes with the person's ability to live their life.
- The interference does not go away quickly and lasts longer than typical emotions or reactions would be expected to.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP



HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL EXPERIENCE A MENTAL DISORDER?

1 in 5 adults in the United States in any given year.

Almost half of all adults living in the United States will experience a mental health challenge at some point over the course of their lifetime.



HOW DO GAPS IN TREATMENT IMPACT PEOPLE?

Many people with common mental disorders do not seek professional help.

More than 40 percent of people with mental disorders sought no treatment in the prior year.

First Aiders can help to remove barriers to care, such as cost, stigma, logistics, and lack of awareness.



WHAT IS RECOVERY?

Recovery is a process of change through which individuals improve their health and well-being, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential with the goals of hope, empowerment, and independence.

Key Factors to Recovery

- **Health** — overcoming or managing one's symptoms and making informed, healthy choices that support physical and emotional well-being.
- **Home** — having a stable and safe place to live.
- **Purpose** — conducting meaningful daily activities and having the independence, income, and resources to participate in society.
- **Community** — having relationships and social networks that provide support, friendships, love, and hope.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP

QUICK FACTS: DEPRESSIVE DISORDERS

DEPRESSIVE DISORDERS

Depression is sad or low mood that persists for at least 2 weeks.

Some risk factors:

- History of trauma
- Family history
- Previous episodes
- Gender
- Sensitivity
- Social circumstances
- Medical conditions or medications

Crises associated with depression:

- Nonsuicidal self-injury
- Suicidal thoughts and behaviors

QUICK FACTS:

- **May and can recur.**
- **Between 80-90% of people with depression** have a positive outcome with treatment.

QUICK FACTS: ANXIETY DISORDERS

ANXIETY DISORDERS

Anxiety is a feeling of worry caused by perceived threats in the environment.

Some risk factors:

- Sensitivity
- Childhood anxiety
- Adverse childhood experiences
- Traumatic experiences
- Gender
- Alcohol misuse
- Family and relationship instability
- Certain medical conditions and medications

Crises associated with anxiety:

- Nonsuicidal self-injury
- Panic attack
- Suicidal thoughts and behaviors

QUICK FACTS:

- More than half of Americans with anxiety will experience their **first episode by age 11**.
- More than **1 in 6 American adults** between the ages of 18 and 54 experience an anxiety disorder in a given year.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP

QUICK FACTS: PTSD

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

Post-traumatic stress disorder is a disorder that can occur after a person has experienced a traumatic event.

A person can experience one event that has a lifetime impact on their overall well-being and their capacity to cope. For another person, the impact of trauma may build up over time through a series of traumatic events before an impact is identified.

Potential crises:

- Nonsuicidal self-injury
- Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
- Psychosis
- Substance use

QUICK FACTS:

- It is typical to have a negative reaction after a traumatic event, but a person may be diagnosed with PTSD when **they are unable to cope with the traumatic experience for more than four weeks**.

QUICK FACTS: BIPOLAR DISORDER

BIPOLAR DISORDER

Bipolar disorder is an illness characterized by extreme swings in mood, energy, and activity level.

It appears that there is no single cause of bipolar disorder, but rather that both genes (heredity) and other factors play a role. There are different types of bipolar disorder.

Potential crises:

- Nonsuicidal self-injury
- Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
- Psychosis
- Substance use

QUICK FACTS:

- Half of all people with bipolar disorder will have had **their first episode by age 25**.
- **2 out of every 100 adults** living in the United States experience bipolar disorder every year.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP

QUICK FACTS: EATING DISORDERS

EATING DISORDERS

Eating disorders are serious illnesses in which people have severe disturbances in their eating behaviors and distorted thoughts and emotions about how their body looks or feels.

Some risk factors:

- Adverse childhood experiences
- Sexual violence or abuse
- Family history of dieting
- Anxiety
- Sensitivity to critical comments from others about eating, weight, or body shape
- Pressure to be a certain body type (from one's job or pasttimes)

Potential crises:

- Nonsuicidal self-injury
- Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
- Medical emergencies

QUICK FACTS:

- One eating disorder, **anorexia nervosa**, has the highest mortality rate of any mental disorder: 10%.
- **Less than a third** of the people with anorexia nervosa receive treatment.

QUICK FACTS: SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

A **substance use disorder** is a "pattern of using alcohol or another substance that results in impairment in daily life or noticeable distress" (APA, 2013).

Some risk factors:

- Genetic predisposition
- Exposure to physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or trauma
- Other mental disorders
- Substance use in the family or among peers
- Access to an addictive substance

Potential crises:

- Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
- Medical emergencies

QUICK FACTS:

- **People with anxiety or depression are more likely** to develop a substance use disorder.
- **172 people died** from drug overdoses every day in 2017.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP

QUICK FACTS: PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS

PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS

Psychosis is a condition in which a person has lost some contact with reality.

The person may have severe disturbances in thinking, emotion and behavior.
Psychosis usually occurs in episodes and is not a constant or static condition.

Disorders that can feature psychosis:

- Schizoaffective disorder
- Bipolar disorder
- Substance use disorders
- Schizophrenia

QUICK FACTS:

- **3 in 100 will experience psychosis** in their lives.
- First episode of psychosis usually occurs **between ages 15 and 25**.
- **Early intervention is key** to improving outcomes.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID: SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION RECAP

THE CONCEPTS INTRODUCED IN THE MHFA SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION CONNECT TO MY COMMUNITY BECAUSE...

THE CONCEPTS INTRODUCED IN THE MHFA SELF-PACED INTRODUCTION MAKE ME THINK ABOUT MY ROLE AS A _____ BECAUSE...

ALGEE: MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID ACTION PLAN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this segment, you will learn:

- The 5 steps of the MHFA Action Pan (ALGEE).

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE).



» By Sarah Montgomery

DAISY IN MAY

My journey with mental health has always been chaotic. It felt like thoughts and delusions were constantly running my mind, especially every spring. I didn't know what was fact or fiction. The flower is what came to be through the layers of turmoil and years of pain. I want to stand tall with my illness — like this bold flower shows — because only I truly know what it took to get here. Now, I hope to help those who are suffering and let them know that something may blossom from the chaos they are currently in.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID ACTION PLAN

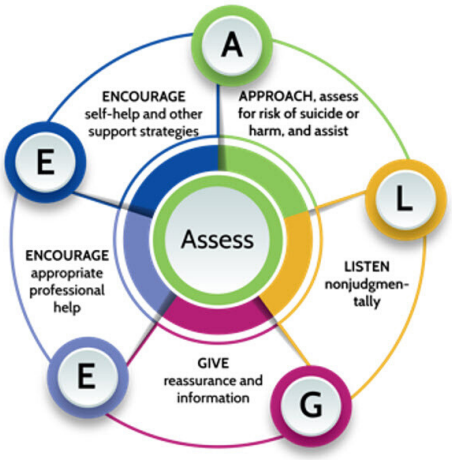
Assess for risk of suicide or harm

Listen nonjudgmentally

Give reassurance and information

Encourage appropriate professional help

Encourage self-help and other support strategies



WHAT ARE HELPFUL AND UNHELPFUL APPROACHES?

1. I understand and know exactly what you are going through. That happened to me two years ago.

2. I am concerned about you.

3. You'll get over it, you've just got to ignore it and get on with life.

4. You' ll feel differently tomorrow.

5. It's such a beautiful day outside. How can you feel so sad?

6. How long have you been feeling like this?

7. Have you spoken to anyone about this before?

8. Pull yourself together.

9. Is something bothering you?

10. You haven't been joining us lately at coffee break — are you okay?

11. It is hard for me to understand exactly what you are going through, but I can see that it's distressing for you.

12. Let's go and have a cup of tea.

13. Something seems to be bothering you. Do you want to talk about it?

14. I 'd like to stop and talk, but I've got to go. I'll give you a call later.

15. You're here to work and have a job to do. It is time ot get on with it.

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF VERBAL AND NONVERBAL CUES TO DEMONSTRATE LISTENING?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

HOW DOES CULTURE INTERSECT WITH HOW WE COMMUNICATE AND LISTEN?



THINK ABOUT A TIME YOU FELT REASSURED BY SOMEONE. CIRCLE THE ACTIONS THEY USED TO PROVIDE YOU REASSURANCE.

- Had realistic expectations about what you were going through.
- Made promises they couldn't keep.
- Dismissed the problem or emotions.
- Focused on what was the "right" or "wrong" thing to do.
- Offered consistent emotional support.
- Acknowledged the limits of what they could do.
- Gave you hope.
- Gave advice.
- Tried to fix the problem themselves.
- Provided practical help.
- Made light of or made fun of the problem.
- Provided information.
- Talked in a sarcastic, hostile, or patronizing way.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHO ARE THE PROFESSIONALS WE COULD ENCOURAGE SOMEONE TO CONNECT TO IF THEY ARE EXPERIENCING A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE?



WHAT SHOULD A MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER DO IF SOMEONE DOES NOT WANT TO CONNECT WITH PROFESSIONAL HELP?



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHAT PEOPLE, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES MAY BE HELPFUL FOR A PERSON WITH A MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE?

PEOPLE	PROGRAMS	ACTIVITIES

NOTES

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255) [24/7 Hotline]
1-888-628-9454 (Spanish)
1-800-799-4889 (TTY)
This hotline is available 24 hours a day.

Crisis Text Line
Text "MHFA" to **741741** to speak with a compassionate, trained crisis counselor, a volunteer who has been trained to help with problem-solving and will address the caller's situation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) is a non-linear plan. Action A involves assessing for crises. If the person is not in crisis, you may move to other parts of the action plan.
- Use verbal and non-verbal cues to convey nonjudgmental listening.
- Giving reassurance and information is not the same as giving advice.
- Reassurance is a statement or action taken to help remove a person's fear.
- Information is a set of facts given about a specific topic.
- There are many types of professionals who can help and a wide variety of treatments available to help a person recover from a mental health or substance use challenge.
- There are a wide range of self-help and coping strategies that are effective.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR **EARLY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this segment, you will learn to:

- Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) when a person shows early signs of a mental health challenge.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Importance of early intervention.
- Early signs and symptoms.
- Applying ALGEE to non-crisis situations.



» By Kimberly Frentheway

IN AMONGST THE ASHES

I created this piece when I was in the midst of a difficult depressive episode as part of the bipolar disorder I live with. The heart is shattered but being held together among the pain, because I have learned many new skills to help me cope with the ups and downs of my illness. I created this piece when I felt like I was barely holding it together. I had experienced a significant loss, as well, and this piece reflects that. Art is a way for me to divert my excess energy or negative feelings in a positive way, and it often helps me communicate those feelings to providers in ways that I wouldn't be able to otherwise.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHAT IS EARLY INTERVENTION?



WHY IS EARLY INTERVENTION IMPORTANT?



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"BOXING"

Part 1: Circle the signs and symptoms you notice.



BEHAVIOR

- An emerging pattern of showing up late for or cancelling personal and professional commitments.



APPEARANCE

- Tired looking.
- Disheveled clothing.
- Appearing more unkempt than usual for the person.



FEELINGS

- No longer enjoying work, activities, or hobbies.
- Sadness.
- Worry.



THOUGHTS

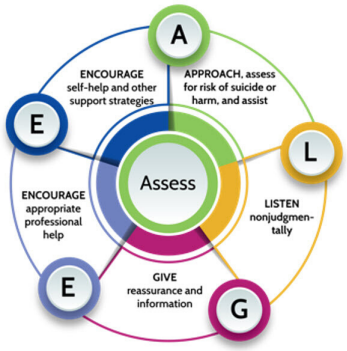
- Difficulty concentrating or focusing at home, school, or work.
- Indecisiveness.

WHAT ADDITIONAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS DID YOU NOTICE?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"BOXING"

Part 1: Was this person in a crisis?



WHAT ALGEE STEPS WERE DEMONSTRATED? BY WHOM?

HELPFUL	UNHELPFUL
A	**A**
L	**L**
G	**G**
E	**E**
E	**E**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

SCENARIO 1

ASSESS: Is the person in crisis? How would you **approach** the person?

A

LISTEN: What would you do to show **nonjudgmental listening**?

L

GIVE: What **reassurance** and **information** would you give in this scenario?

G

ENCOURAGE: How would you encourage **appropriate professional help**?

E

ENCOURAGE: How would you encourage **self-help** and **other support strategies**?

E

NOTES

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
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Crisis Text Line
Text "MHFA" to **741741** to speak with a compassionate, trained crisis counselor, a volunteer who has been trained to help with problem-solving and will address the caller's situation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) is a non-linear plan. MHFA is most effective as an early intervention.
- Typically, the sooner you can connect a person to professional and self-help resources, the better the outcome for the person.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR **WORSENING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**



» By Pete Morelewicz

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this segment, you will learn to:

- Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) when a person shows worsening signs of a mental health challenge.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Impact of delaying treatment.
- Worsening signs and symptoms.
- Applying ALGEE to non-crisis situations.

FIRST IMPRESSION

I often use the creative process as an avenue to explore and temper my anxiety disorder. In particularly rough times, I find it helpful to dive into an art project that is larger than myself. That is, to get outside of my own head and acknowledge and appreciate the anxiety that others feel, too. Making a connection to the larger world helps break the cycle of an inner-anxiety spiral.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHY DO PEOPLE DELAY GETTING TREATMENT AND SUPPORT?



FILL IN THE BLANK.

People are more likely to seek help if someone close to them _____ it.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"BOXING"

Part 2: Before the crisis: Circle the signs and symptoms you notice.



BEHAVIOR

- Withdrawing from family and friends.
- Absenteeism or "presenteeism."
- Odd or erratic behavior.



APPEARANCE

- Declining personal hygiene.
- Cuts or bruises in various stages of healing.



FEELINGS

- Increasing self-blame or self-criticism.
- Distorted body image.
- Thoughts racing or mind going blank.



THOUGHTS

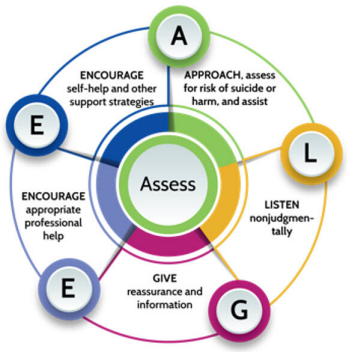
- Increasing sadness.
- Hopelessness or despair.
- Increasing worry.
- Anger or rage.

BEFORE THE CRISIS: WHAT ADDITIONAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS DID YOU NOTICE?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"BOXING"

Part 2:



BEFORE THE CRISIS: WHAT ALGEE STEPS WERE DEMONSTRATED? BY WHOM?

HELPFUL	UNHELPFUL
A	**A**
L	**L**
G	**G**
E	**E**
E	**E**

AFTER THE CRISIS: HOW DID THE COACH CONTINUE TO HELP AFTER THE CRISIS SITUATION RESOLVED?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

SCENARIO 2

ASSESS: Is the person in crisis? How would you **approach** the person?

A

LISTEN: What would you do to show **nonjudgmental listening**?

L

GIVE: What **reassurance** and **information** would you give in this scenario?

G

ENCOURAGE: How would you encourage **appropriate professional help**?

E

ENCOURAGE: How would you encourage **self-help** and **other support strategies**?

E

NOTES

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Text "MHFA" to **741741** to speak with a compassionate, trained crisis counselor, a volunteer who has been trained to help with problem-solving and will address the caller's situation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The ALGEE action plan is a **non-linear** plan.
- Many people have a long delay between delveloping a mental health challenge and getting connected to appropriate treatement and support. The longer the delay, the more difficult the recovery can be.
- People are more likely to seek help if someone close to them **suggests** it.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID FOR **CRISIS SITUATIONS**



» By Gen Gaines

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this segment, you will learn to:

- Apply the appropriate steps of the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) in crisis situations.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Definition of a crisis.
- Considerations when reaching out.
- Types of crises.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

I have suffered with this serious mental illness since my early teens. Oftentimes, I've felt suicidal and without hope. My art is about the struggle and trade-offs of remaining compliant with psych medications. The butterfly represents myself and those whom I can either visit with negativity or with nurturing, based on my given mental state. Obvious tropes, such as the skull and flowers balanced on opposite sides of the canvas, represent death versus life. The fictional medication — the huge red pill — is levitating outside of the bottle, reflecting my thought processes about taking it.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHAT IS A CRISIS?



WHAT DO FIRST AIDERS NEED TO CONSIDER BEFORE REACHING OUT IN CRISIS SITUATIONS?



WHAT ARE SOME DE-ESCALATION STRATEGIES?



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

HOW CAN A FIRST AIDER HELP A PERSON EXPERIENCING SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS RESEMBLING A PANIC ATTACK?

"THE NEW JOB"

What signs and symptoms did you notice?



BEHAVIOR



APPEARANCE



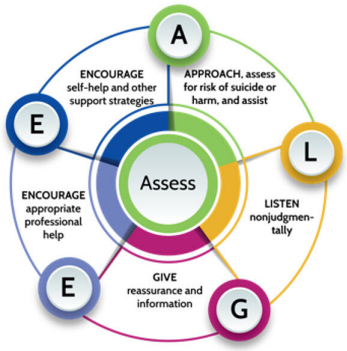
FEELINGS



THOUGHTS

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"THE NEW JOB"



WAS THIS PERSON IN A CRISIS?
WHAT ALGEE STEPS WERE DEMONSTRATED?
BY WHOM?

HELPFUL	UNHELPFUL
A	**A**
L	**L**
G	**G**
E	**E**
E	**E**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

KEY ACTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN TRYING TO HELP SOMEONE EXHIBITING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIORS:

- **Ensure your own safety.**
- **Attempt to de-escalate.**
- **Connect to appropriate professional help as needed.**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHY IS EARLY INTERVENTION FOLLOWING A TRAUMATIC EVENT CRITICAL?

KEY ACTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN HELPING SOMEONE IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING A TRAUMATIC EVENT:

- **Ensure your own safety.**
- **Create a safe environment.**
- **Identify the person's immediate needs.**

TRAUMATIC EVENTS: HOW CAN A FIRST AIDER HELP OVER TIME?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

SCENARIO

TRAUMA: WHAT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS DID YOU NOTICE?



BEHAVIOR



APPEARANCE



FEELINGS



THOUGHTS

SCENARIO

TRAUMA: HOW WOULD YOU PROVIDE IMMEDIATE SUPPORT TO THIS PERSON?

SCENARIO

TRAUMA: HOW WOULD YOU SUPPORT THIS PERSON OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHAT IS NONSUICIDAL SELF-INJURY?

KEY ACTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU NOTICE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF NONSUICIDAL SELF-INJURY:

- **Address your observations directly.**
- **Listen nonjudgmentally.**
- **Avoid overreacting, but address medical emergencies.**

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF MEDICAL EMERGENCIES?



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHAT ARE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE?

KEY ACTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU NOTICE WARNING SIGNS OF SUICIDE:

- **Ask directly: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" or "Are you thinking about suicide?"**
- **Work together to keep them safe for now. Consider calling the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.**
- **Connect them with a professional.**
- **If you don't feel as though you can keep the individual or yourself safe, get help / immediately.**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"SHINING A LIGHT"

Part 1:

WHAT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS DID YOU NOTICE?



BEHAVIOR



APPEARANCE



FEELINGS

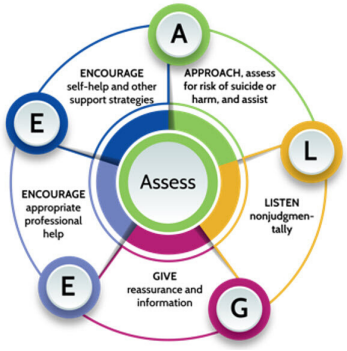


THOUGHTS

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"SHINING A LIGHT"

Part 1: Is this person in a crisis?



WHAT STEPS OF THE ACTION PLAN ARE DEMONSTRATED? BY WHOM?

HELPFUL	UNHELPFUL
A	**A**
L	**L**
G	**G**
E	**E**
E	**E**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"SHINING A LIGHT"

Part 2: What signs and symptoms did you notice?



BEHAVIOR



APPEARANCE



FEELINGS



THOUGHTS

WHAT FEARS DID JEREMY HAVE ABOUT TALKING WITH HIS DAD?



WHAT MISINFORMATION DID JEREMY HAVE ABOUT SUICIDE?



"SHINING A LIGHT ON THAT DARK PLACE" — WHAT DID THE FRIEND MEAN BY THAT?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"SHINING A LIGHT"

Part 3:

WHAT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS DID YOU NOTICE?



BEHAVIOR



APPEARANCE



FEELINGS



THOUGHTS

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"SHINING A LIGHT"

Part 3: Is this person in a crisis?



WHAT STEPS OF THE ACTION PLAN ARE DEMONSTRATED? BY WHOM?

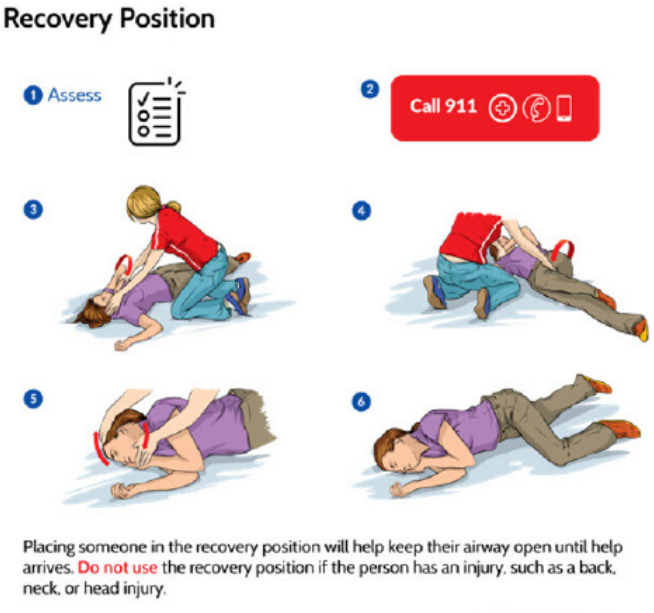
HELPFUL	UNHELPFUL
A	**A**
L	**L**
G	**G**
E	**E**
E	**E**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

WHAT IS AN OVERDOSE?

KEY ACTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU NOTICE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF AN OVERDOSE:

- **Call 911.**
- **Place the person in the recovery position while you wait for help to arrive. Do not use the recovery position if the person has a head, back, or neck injury.**



KEY ACTIONS TO REMEMBER WHEN YOU NOTICE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A SEVERE PSYCHOTIC STATE:

- **De-escalate.**
- **Call appropriate professional help, if necessary.**
- **If your safety or the safety of the person or others is at risk, get help immediately.**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

AUDITORY HALLUCINATION EXERCISE: THE SETUP

THE PURPOSE

- To simulate the experience of auditory hallucinations.
- To practice noticing skills.

THE ROLES



Mental Health First Aider



Adult



Script Reader



Observer (optional)

THE RULES

- Challenge by choice.
- Only read from the script.
- Maintain your typical speaking voice.
- Respect the activity and lived experience.

THE DIRECTIONS

- Roll a paper into a paper cone.
- Use the paper cone to speak into the adult's ear.
- Do not deviate from or alter this script.
- Read through the script two times and switch roles.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

AUDITORY HALLUCINATION EXERCISE: THE SETUP

THE SCRIPT



- Why are you talking to them?
- Don't trust them.
- Why are you talking to them?
- Don't trust them.
- Are they looking at you?
- Why would they want to talk with you?
- Do you think you can trust them?
- You can't trust them. You can't trust anyone.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

AUDITORY HALLUCINATION EXERCISE: THE DEBRIEF



APPEARANCE: HOW DID THE ADULT APPEAR?





BEHAVIOR: HOW DID THE ADULT BEHAVE?





FEELINGS: WHAT FEELINGS DID YOU NOTICE OR DID THE ADULT EXPRESS?





THOUGHTS: WHAT DID YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE ADULT'S THOUGHTS?



IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"NEIGHBORS"

WHAT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS DID YOU NOTICE?



BEHAVIOR



APPEARANCE



FEELINGS



THOUGHTS

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

"NEIGHBORS"

Is this person in a crisis?



WHAT STEPS OF THE ACTION PLAN ARE DEMONSTRATED? BY WHOM?

HELPFUL	UNHELPFUL
A	**A**
L	**L**
G	**G**
E	**E**
E	**E**

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

SCENARIO 3

ASSESS: Is the person in crisis? How would you **approach** the person?

A

LISTEN: What would you do to show **nonjudgmental listening**?

L

GIVE: What **reassurance** and **information** would you give in this scenario?

G

ENCOURAGE: How would you encourage **appropriate professional help**?

E

ENCOURAGE: How would you encourage **self-help** and **other support strategies**?

E

NOTES

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255) [24/7 Hotline]
1-888-628-9454 (Spanish)
1-800-799-4889 (TTY)
This hotline is available 24 hours a day.

Crisis Text Line
Text "MHFA" to 741741 to speak with a compassionate, trained crisis counselor, a volunteer who has been trained to help with problem-solving and will address the caller's situation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The following situations **may become a crisis**: panic attacks, aggressive behaviors, substance misuse, following a traumatic event, and nonsuicidal self-injury.
- The following situations **are an immediate crisis**: medical emergency, suicidal thoughts and behaviors, severe effects of drug or alcohol use, and severe psychotic state.
- When a First Aider notices warning signs of suicide, it is best to ask the questions **"Are you thinking of killing yourself?"** or **"Are you thinking of suicide?"**
- More detailed information on how to respond to crises can be found in your manual .

SELF-CARE FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this segment, you will learn:

- How to choose appropriate methods for self-care following the application of Mental Health First Aid in a crisis or non-crisis situation.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

- Self-care.
- Recovery.
- Privacy.



» By Amy Kerr

I AM MORE

In January of 2017, while in the depths of depression, the phrase, "I am more than this," popped into my head, and a fully formed public art and writing project seemed to download into my brain: "I Am More." It combines my portraits in pastel and colored pencil with the writing of the portrait subject describing how they are more than their challenges. Subjects from ages 15 to 79 are pictured in the location of their choice, and they describe how they are more than their depression, grief, PTSD, eating disorders, addiction, cancer diagnosis and more.

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU NEED TO REFUEL WITH SELF-CARE?

WHEN YOU NEED TO DEBRIEF DURING OR AFTER PROVIDING MHFA, WHO CAN YOU CONTACT FROM YOUR SELF-CARE ACTION PLAN?

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO RESPECT THE PRIVACY OF THE INDIVIDUAL?

IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

DIRECTIONS: IDENTIFY THE PII THAT IS REVEALED IN THE SCENARIO. IN THE SPACE PROVIDED, WRITE ANOTHER WAY TO SHARE WITHOUT REVEALING PII.



PII EXERCISE 1

- "The Executive Director of the CYWS program called me yesterday because he is going through a tough time. I'm really worried about him and I don't know what to do."



PII EXERCISE 2

- "Sorry I was late to pickup yesterday. I was helping my friend, Sarah Kong. She was having a panic attack and it came out of the blue. I wanted to be there for her."



PII EXERCISE 3

- "I can't share names because I want to respect their privacy, but this person is in a leadership role within the Communications Department."



PII EXERCISE 4

- "See email below. What was the name of the counselor that your friend went to? She really liked her, right? I want to send my cousin information about counselors in the area."



PII EXERCISE 5

- "I want to get your input to see if I did the right thing. My co-worker, the one with the four children at the same high school as your son, seems to be really sad lately."

NOTES

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

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This hotline is available 24 hours a day.

Crisis Text Line
Text "MHFA" to **741741** to speak with a compassionate, trained crisis counselor, a volunteer who has been trained to help with problem-solving and will address the caller's situation.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Mental Health First Aiders **can support a person in their recovery** by continuing to use the steps of MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE), if needed.
- **Self-care** is an important part of being a Mental Health First Aider.
- **Respecting privacy** is critical when debriefing with someone during or after providing support in your role as a Mental Health First Aider.

REFLECTION

3

RESOURCES TO REMEMBER

2

THINGS I LEARNED

1

ACTION I WILL TAKE

RESOURCE ALERT